

Tony given a lesson

Wycombe W. 1, Cheltenham T. 1

JULIAN LAILEY, who taught Tony Price while at Cheltenham Grammar School, gave the Wycombe Wanderers' winger another lesson on Saturday, when Cheltenham Town gained a 1-1 draw in an end-of-season friendly at Loakes Park.

Lailey, returning to the ground where he became a particular favourite of Wanderers' fans, gave an immaculate performance at left back. Both his tackling and distribution were of a high order and it was not until Price switched flanks during the second half, that he was able to exert his influence.

Wycombe particularly in the later stages could have gained a clear cut victory, despite Lailey's heroics but a combination of missed chances and some strange decisions by local referee Bill Cleere meant they had to be satisfied with a draw.

Several times Mr. Cleere failed to use the advantage rule, following petty offences and it was usually Wycombe who suffered. Had play continued the home side might have scored on two occasions.

But the most crucial decision of the lot, came on the hour, when Mr. Cleere awarded Cheltenham a penalty following an apparent foul by goalkeeper John Maskell. The 'keeper, after diving on a loose ball in the penalty area, was nudged by Ken Skeen as he prepared to kick upfield.

As a form of mild rebuke, Maskell appeared to push the ball into Keen's face. To the astonishment of the players Mr. Cleere awarded a penalty and the ever calm Lailey placed the ball wide of the goalkeeper for Cheltenham's equaliser.

Ironically Wycombe's goal, which came in the 25th minute also resulted from a penalty. Dylan Evans, playing against his former team-mates used his speed to burst through the middle and was about to shoot, when brought down by full-back Roger Griffiths. Graham Mackenzie sent Ken Hall the wrong way.

It was strange that a game played between such attractive sides, who know how to produce positive football should be decided on penalties, but both sides missed clear cut chances, while Hall brought off several brave dives in the Cheltenham goalmouth.

Keith Searle, for instance, was given a great chance in the very first minute, but he was too slow to shoot and the ball

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was cleared for a corner. This was one of only four corners to Wycombe in the whole match, while their opponents forced seven.

Skeen, the former Oxford United centre-forward is a strong, hard player, capable of taking up threatening positions. Put through by Lailey, Skeen looked likely to score in the 10th minute, but Raine, quickly off his line, was able to smother the shot.

At the other end, Searle, who did not look in his sharpest form, failed to put away a 15 yard shot after a fine run by Evans down the left. The 'keeper did well to block this shot and another effort by Larry Pritchard before the interval.

Wycombe made four substitutions at half-time bringing on Maskell, Steve Perrin, Terry Reardon and Paul Birdseye for Raine, Searle, Mackenzie and Bullock. The game, not unnaturally, went a little quiet as the new players settled themselves in. Roger Grant replaced newcomer Paul Griffiths at right-back in the 62nd minute.

The final quarter belonged almost exclusively to Wycombe, as they relentlessly pounded the Southern League side's defence. Price fired two strong shots straight at Hall, while Reardon headed over the bar, when unmarked at the far post.

Perrin came to life in the closing minutes. First he hit the post following a great upfield run and then he fired just over with a fierce drive.

WYCOMBE WANDERERS: K. Raine (sub. J. Maskell); P. Griffiths (sub. R. Grant); D. Gamblin, K. Mead, D. Bullock (sub. P. Birdseye), P. Wood, K. Searle (sub. S. Perrin), G. Mackenzie (sub. T. Reardon), D. Evans, L. Pritchard, A. Price.

CHELTENHAM: K. Hall; R. Griffiths (sub. T. Cooper), J. Lailey, J. Bailey, A. Jefferies, T. Jones (sub. John Flanagan), J. Flanagan, P. Casey, K. Skeen, D. Dangerfield, R. Wilkes.

Referee: W. Cleere (Downley).
Goalscorers: Wycombe: Mackenzie (25 pen); Cheltenham: Lailey (60 min. pen.).

Official paying attendance: 420.
Total approx. attendance: 650.